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ABSTRACT

The Florida Follow Through Model is one of several federally-funded experimental programs that attempts to modify the type of educational experience that children from low-income backgrounds receive during their first four years (K-3) of schooling. In the case of the Florida model, the emphasis is on home as well as school intervention. Two mothers from low-income backgrounds are trained and placed in the classroom to work as a team with the teacher. Called parent educators, the mothers visit the homes of the children in the classroom weekly and assist the teacher with classroom instruction. The classroom teacher is a key person in the Florida model. She coordinates both the instructional and home visit activities of the parent educators. Her morale is therefore important to the success of the program. It is the purpose of this article to: (1) briefly examine the nature of teacher morale, (2) look at the ways in which the Florida model affects teacher morale and, therefore, the child through the delicate set of home-school interactions called for by the model, and (3) report empirical data concerning the effect of the model on teacher morale during its first two years of operation. During the first two years of operation, teacher morale was assessed by a means of the "Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire" which is probably the best known and most widely used of all self-report teacher morale instruments. (Author/JM)

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Teacher Morale in a Home Intervention Follow Through Program

By

Gordon E. Greenwood[1]

The Florida Follow Through Model is one of several federally-funded experimental programs that attempts to modify the type of educational experience that children from low-income backgrounds receive during their first four years (K-3) of schooling (Maccoby & Zellner, 1970). In the case of the Florida Model, the emphasis is on home as well as school intervention. Two mothers from low-income backgrounds are trained and placed in the classroom to work as a team with the teacher. Called parent educators, the mothers visit the homes of the children in the classroom weekly and assist the teacher with classroom instruction.

The classroom teacher is a key person in the Florida Model. She coordinates both the instructional and home visit activities of the parent educators. Her morale is therefore important to the success of the program. It is the purpose of this article to: (1) briefly examine the nature of teacher morale, (2) look at the ways in which the Florida Model affects teacher morale and, therefore, the child through the delicate set of home-school interactions called for by the model, and (3) report empirical data concerning the effect of the model on teacher morale during its first two years of operation.

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Nature of Teacher Morale

Teacher morale has been defined in a variety of ways (Coughlan, 1970). Guion's (1958) definition of morale is probably typical: "Morale is the extent to which an individual's needs are satisfied and the extent to which the individual perceives that satisfaction as stemming from his total job situation." Gordon (1963) makes what is perhaps a somewhat useful distinction between morale and job satisfaction when he says that job satisfaction refers "to the reactions of individuals to specific elements in their working environment, whereas morale often is applied to the general level of satisfaction and enthusiasm of individuals and groups."

Morale can also be viewed from the standpoint of organizational theory. Lonsdale (1964), for example, maintains that ". . . morale is a feeling of participants in an organization stemming from a combination of (a) perceived productivity or progress toward the achievement of the tasks of the organization, and (b) perceived job satisfaction or the satisfaction of individual needs through the interaction of the participant in his role within the work group and the total organization. Further, high morale is the participant's perception of a successful task-needs integration."

Bentley and Rempel (1967), the developers of the teacher morale instrument called The Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire, accept an organizational theory approach when they state: "Morale is conceived as an effect related to the successful interaction among individual needs and incentives and organizational goals. These theoretical considerations support the conceptual definition of our teacher morale studies. . ." When teachers occupy a key role in a program, it is important to take into consideration their

morale. As Argyris (1957) points out, when the needs of individuals in work roles are not met, the disturbance will manifest itself in: (1) quitting, (2) moving up the ladder, (3) adopting defense mechanisms, and (4) apathy and loss of interest.

The Florida Model and the Teacher

The Florida Model affects the teacher's job in several ways. No longer is there one teacher and 30 children alone together in the classroom. Two parent educators who are likely to be from a different social class and ethnic group than the teacher are there to help her. However, parent educators are not the same as teacher aides who engage primarily in clerical, baby sitting, and housekeeping activities. Instead, they engage in instruction under the guidance of the teacher, and are often called "teacher" by the children. The Florida Model requires that the parent educator engage in classroom instruction in hopes that her social class and ethnic background and the training that she receives allow her to promote communication within the classroom as well as between the home and the school. Such classroom instructional activities also allow her to engage in the same kind of instructional activities with the child that she demonstrates to the child's mother and, hence, are integrally related to her home visitation activities.

Parent educators generally spend about half of a school day in the classroom. The other half of the day is spent making three to four home visits. Most home visits involve the parent educator demonstrating and teaching a learning task to the mother, who later teaches it to her child. Before the parent educator makes a home visit, however, she not only plans the visit with the teacher, but she helps the teacher prepare the learning task and decide whether it is suitable for the child in question. In short, the teacher must spend considerable time planning with her

parent educators and supervising their activities. She must not only help them plan their classroom instructional activities, but must help them plan their home visitation activities, and take the lead in building the learning tasks that are taken into the homes.

Such activities as the above require the teacher to become more aware of and take into consideration each child's way of life, the values and language to which the child is exposed at home, etc. For example, one criterion of a good learning task is that, whenever possible, it should utilize materials in the child's home. The fact that the teacher helps her parent educators build learning tasks and perhaps try them out in the classroom before they go into the home, may indirectly put pressure on her to change her own teaching procedures in the direction of those involved in constructing and teaching a good home learning task. For example, good home learning tasks are designed to stimulate the learner so that he is active, asks a lot of questions, shows interest in what he is doing, thinks up new activities that grow out of the task, and feels good about what he has learned. Such activities could exert considerable pressure on a "traditional teacher."

Florida Model teachers must adjust to constant inservice training activities and an endless stream of classroom visitors, as well as parent volunteers. Many teachers attend summer workshops at the University of Florida that usually last two to three weeks and are followed by one-week local workshops at the beginning of school. Each month a University of Florida consultant visits for two days, and spends part of his visit conducting an inservice training activity. In addition, local inservice activities, some of which extend beyond the regular school day, are not uncommon.

Data collection activities by Florida personnel and parent educators involve the teachers in several ways. They assist and supervise the parent educators in gathering data on Follow Through parents, homes, and children. Finally, they have the primary responsibility for utilizing some of the data when they engage in such activities as task building and classroom instructional planning with the parent educators.

The Florida Model should also increase the amount and kind of contact that the teacher has with parents, particularly low income parents. Through the parent educator, the teacher increases her knowledge of the activities in the child's home, but at the same time the Follow Through parent should increase his knowledge of the activities that go on in the classroom. Some parents obtain a more direct and constant contact with the teacher by working in the classroom as a parent volunteer.

Parent-teacher contact should also be increased to some extent by the activities of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) which is composed of Follow Through parents. Although PAC activities varied considerably from community to community, most PAC's held monthly meetings and participated to some extent in decision-making activities, including those involved in the recruitment and selection of Follow Through personnel. Some PAC's engaged in such activities as picnics, potluck suppers, school open houses, parent field trips, and adult education. It might be added that teachers cannot be PAC members although they are invited to attend meetings.

Changes in the Morale of Florida Follow Through Model Teachers

It should be obvious that the participation of a teacher in the Florida program is likely to change her job situation in many ways, and

may therefore affect her morale. During its first two years of operation, the morale of teachers in the Florida Model was assessed by means of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) developed by Bentley and Rempel (1967), which is probably the best known and most widely used of all self-report teacher morale instruments. The subject is asked to indicate whether he agrees, probably agrees, probably disagrees, or disagrees with 100 statements. Such statements as the following would seem particularly relevant to the Florida Model program: "My teaching load is greater than that of most of the other teachers in our school;" "The number of hours a teacher must work is unreasonable;" "Keeping up professionally is too much of a burden;" "I feel successful and competent in my present position;" "The curriculum of our school makes reasonable provision for student individual differences." Some of the PTO items are not as directly related to Follow Through as are those above.

The PTO yields ten factor scores and a total score. The validity of the PTO has been demonstrated in terms of both peer ratings and principal ratings. Test-retest correlations range from .62 to .88 for the factors and .87 for the total score (Bentley and Rempel, 1967).

Procedure - The Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire was administered to 30 Follow Through teachers and seven comparison teachers in six Follow Through centers (Jacksonville, Fla.; Jonesboro, Ark.; Lac du Flambeau, Wis.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Richmond, Va.; Yakima, Wash.) during the 1968-69 academic year. The PTO was administered again to 108 Follow Through teachers and 13 comparison teachers in 11 Follow Through centers (Chattanooga, Tenn.; Houston, Tex.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Jonesboro, Ark.; Lac du Flambeau, Wis.; Lawrenceburg, Ind.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Richmond, Va.; Tampa, Fla.; Winnsboro, S. C.; Yakima, Wash.) during the 1969-70

academic year. Both times the instrument was administered in September and again in May.

Results - Table I summarizes the F values and means obtained from a 2 (experimental vs comparison) times 2 (pre vs post) factorial design (Lindquist Type I) analysis of variance of the ten factor scores and the total score for the 1968-69 school year. There were no statistically significant differences between the Follow Through teachers and the comparison teachers on any of the factor scores or the total morale score; nor were there statistically significant changes from pretest to posttest during the 1968-69 academic year.

Table II summarizes the F values, means, and standard deviations obtained from the same type analysis of variance of the ten factor scores and the total score for the 1969-70 school year.

An examination of Table II indicates, in general, that the morale of both the Follow Through and comparison teachers decreased during the 1969-70 school year, but the morale of the Follow Through teachers decreased significantly less than did that of the comparison teachers. Not only did the total morale scores for both groups of teachers decrease significantly, but both groups decreased on every factor except teacher salary. Follow Through teachers decreased less than did comparison teachers on total morale, satisfaction with teaching, teacher load, teacher status, community support of education, community pressures, and school facilities and services. There were no significant differences between Follow Through teachers and comparison teachers on teacher rapport with principal, rapport among teachers, teacher salary and curriculum issues. A homogeneity of variance test indicated that

Table I

Summary of 2 (Experimental vs. Comparison) times 2 (Pre vs. Post) Factorial Design Analysis of Variance F values[1] and Means for Ten Factor and Total Scores of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire from Six Florida Model Follow Through Programs, 1968-69.

	Experimental vs. Comparison (n=30) (n=7)			Pre vs. Post		
	F	Exp. Mean	Comp. Mean	F	Pre Mean	Post Mean
Teacher Rapport with Principal	0.05	67.75	66.71	3.05	70.24	64.86
Satisfaction with Teaching	0.99	72.80	70.29	0.60	72.81	71.84
Rapport among Teachers	0.10	48.53	47.86	0.85	49.03	47.78
Teacher Salary	0.30	20.35	19.36	0.15	20.54	19.78
Teacher Load	1.18	36.37	38.71	0.51	37.30	36.32
Curriculum Issues	0.27	16.45	15.93	0.96	16.62	16.08
Teacher Status	0.28	26.18	25.29	0.17	26.41	25.62
Community Support of Education	0.26	15.05	14.36	0.00	15.11	14.73
School Facilities and Services	0.07	15.42	15.07	0.89	14.89	15.81
Community Pressures	0.77	17.23	17.86	0.39	17.30	17.41
TOTAL	0.13	336.13	331.43	1.27	340.24	330.24

[1] F values at 1-35 d.f.; $p < .05 = 4.12$

Table I (continued)

	Interaction	Cell Means			
	F	Exp. Pre	Exp. Post	Comp. Pre	Comp. Post
Teacher Rapport with Principal	0.37	70.73	64.77	68.14	65.29
Satisfaction with Teaching	0.00	73.27	72.33	70.86	69.71
Rapport among Teachers	0.15	49.23	47.83	48.14	47.57
Teacher Salary	0.90	20.87	19.83	19.14	19.57
Teacher Load	0.05	36.90	35.83	39.00	38.43
Curriculum Issues	0.02	16.73	16.17	16.14	15.71
Teacher Status	3.96	26.93	25.43	24.14	26.43
Community Support of Education	1.20	15.37	14.73	14.00	14.71
School Facilities and Services	0.53	14.87	15.97	15.00	15.14
Community Pressures	0.39	17.23	17.23	17.57	18.14
TOTAL	0.78	342.13	330.13	332.14	330.71

Table II

Summary of 2 (Experimental vs. Comparison) times 2 (Pre vs. Post) Factorial Design Analysis of Variance F values[1], Means, and Standard Deviations for Ten Factor and Total Scores of the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire from 11 Florida Model Follow Through Programs, 1969-70.

	Experimental vs. Comparison (n=108) (n=13)			Pre vs. Post		
	F	Exp. Mean, SD	Comp. Mean, SD	F	Pre Mean	Post Mean
Teacher Rapport with Principal	0.09*	55.41 24.48	54.42 33.69	42.63***	66.93	43.68
Satisfaction with Teaching	6.73	57.74 23.33	49.35 8.02	125.21***	70.55	43.12
Rapport among Teachers	1.32	38.65 13.25	36.27 15.13	62.38***	45.52	31.26
Teacher Salary	0.03	17.80 7.11	17.62 11.87	1.43	16.69	16.87
Teacher Load	7.62**	30.64 12.25	26.42 9.45	65.77***	34.69	25.69
Curriculum Issues	0.02	13.52 5.40	13.42 4.87	35.43***	15.30	11.73
Teacher Status	3.40	21.56 8.30	19.42 7.99	59.34***	24.63	18.02
Community Support of Education	0.38	12.97 5.48	13.42 7.52	16.03***	13.93	12.10
School Facilities and Services	4.49*	13.66 6.34	11.85 7.49	25.16***	15.22	11.70
Community Pressures	1.93	13.69 5.52	12.73 4.27	73.43***	16.24	10.93
TOTAL	2.80	275.63 88.28	254.92 72.18	90.57***	321.70	225.10

[1] F values at 1-119 d.f.

*p <.05
**p <.01
***p <.001

Table II (continued)

	Interaction	Cell Means and SD's			
	F	Exp. Pre	Exp. Post	Comp. Pre	Comp. Post
Teacher Rapport with Principal	0.18	66.87 11.47	43.95 20.63	67.46 14.33	41.38 21.30
Satisfaction with Teaching	12.71***	70.20 6.95	45.28 22.21	73.46 4.47	25.23 4.38
Rapport among Teachers	0.75	45.59 5.06	31.70 12.48	44.92 6.67	27.62 9.54
Teacher Salary	0.27	18.77 5.07	16.82 5.18	18.00 5.74	17.23 6.64
Teacher Load	14.58***	34.42 6.36	26.86 9.68	36.92 6.29	15.92 3.80
Curriculum Issues	3.20	15.16 3.21	11.89 4.44	16.46 3.48	10.38 3.66
Teacher Status	8.30**	24.48 4.76	18.63 6.70	25.85 4.67	13.00 4.81
Community Support of Education	5.37*	13.68 3.74	12.26 3.83	16.08 3.88	10.77 4.30
School Facilities and Services	2.72	15.25 3.88	12.06 4.83	15.00 4.58	8.69 3.30
Community Pressures	5.69*	16.14 2.60	11.23 4.51	17.08 2.47	8.38 2.36
TOTAL	6.06*	320.56 35.59	230.69 80.84	331.23 35.96	178.62 41.37

the experimental and comparison group total score variances are homogeneous (F max = 1.50 at 107 and 12 d.f.).

Discussion - Although a complete longitudinal interpretation of the data is not possible since five new centers were added the second year and new teachers replaced some of the old ones in the six old centers, the lack of morale change during the 1968-69 school year is still probably best explained by the fact that the Florida Model was in its first year of operation. Apparently, the model did not make enough of an impact during its first year for the teachers to see their job situation as being different from that of the comparison teachers. The first year was one of organizing and reflecting upon the nature and limits of the model for the Florida staff, and much care was taken so as "not to interfere with the rights of the local school system." Perhaps the University of Florida staff changed more than did the perceived job situations of the Follow Through teachers.

Explaining the 1969-70 data is more complex. Perhaps it should be noted that ten states were represented in the Florida Follow Through centers surveyed that year. Although significant differences exist between the 11 Follow Through centers in terms of teacher morale, we would suggest that national, state, and local factors contributed to the morale decline in both experimental and comparison teachers. Without definite data one can only guess at the factors that might produce such a drastic decline in teacher morale during the 1969-70 school year. The end of the teacher shortage, the economic recession, the conservative political climate, the problems stemming from integration and school busing, and the general national unrest and dissatisfaction with all social institutions may have finally taken their toll. Perhaps the nine

PTO factors that are statistically significant beyond the .001 level describe best the conditions that were operating. In any case, the Florida Model, perhaps primarily due to changes in the Florida staff and the model itself, seems to have made a significant enough impact to have reduced the negative effect of the factors operating upon the morale of the teachers.

At least one significant fact emerges that school board members and public school administrators should notice: factors other than teacher salary can cause a decrease in teacher morale. The only real surprise in factor differences between experimental and comparison teachers is the curriculum issues factor. It would not be expected that the rapport of the Follow Through teacher with his principal or with other teachers would be significantly different from that of a comparison teacher, nor should their feelings about teacher salary be significantly different. The mere fact that an elementary teacher is involved in an experimental program should not affect his relations with his principal unless the program directly affects the principal's job in some way such as enhancing his status or making his job more difficult. Also, it should not affect the teacher's relations with other teachers unless it creates jealousies. Participation in Follow Through as a teacher is probably viewed more as a matter of belief and choice than as a matter of status and promotion. Hence, teachers remain friends and Follow Through teachers do not expect higher salaries. Relations with the principal remain essentially the same unless he forces the teacher into the program against her wishes.

On the other hand, the curriculum issues factor refers to the "adequacy of the school program in meeting student needs, in providing for individual differences, and in preparing students for effective citizenship" (Bentley and Rempel, 1967). However, the Florida Model does not directly attempt to

change the curriculum or teaching methods employed by the local school system. As has already been pointed out, the task building activities of the teacher and parent educator may indirectly affect the procedures in the classroom. Apparently the Follow Through teachers did not feel that the Florida Model much affected the curriculum issues assessed by the PTO during the 1969-70 school year.

On the positive side, the Florida Model teachers felt better about their teaching load and their status as teachers, and they were more satisfied with teaching than were comparison teachers. Their involvement in what they perceived to be a successful experimental program revolving around their activities and those of the parent educators in the classroom and in the homes may well explain the teachers' feelings. Further, the Follow Through teachers felt better about community support, community pressures, and school facilities and services than did comparison teachers. The fact that the community and school system was willing to obtain the personnel and facilities involved in the Florida Follow Through Program may partly explain these data. In addition, the increased amount of parent contact and parent involvement may have made the teachers feel that their activities were receiving community support, and parent activities such as the PAC may have been viewed as means of mitigating community pressures.

In general, it appears that the Florida Follow Through Model affected teacher morale in more positive ways than did the regular program in the schools involved. Whether this is due to some type of Hawthorne or Rosenthal effect, only time will tell. Among other things, the Florida Model asks the teacher to adjust to cultural differences between herself and her parent educators, her low income children, and her low income parents. In spite of such adjustment demands, the Florida Model teacher maintained a

morale level during 1969-70 that was more positive than that of comparison teachers. The culturally different child should have a better opportunity to grow in positive directions when exposed to such teachers.

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